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SUBJECT: INSTRUCTION: JOIN CONSENSUS AND DELIVER EOP ON UN
GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION "RIGHTS OF THE CHILD"

REF: A. (1) RAZZOUK-DEPARTMENT EMAIL (11/16/2009 AT
9:07PM)
[1](#)B. (2) RAZZOUK-DEPARTMENT EMAIL (11/17/09) AT 7:38PM)

[1](#)1. The Department instructs USDEL to join consensus on the resolution entitled "Rights of the Child" based on the text of the resolution provided in REFTEL 1 with proposed changes to OP 19 in REFTEL 2. If the resolution that is tabled differs from what was provided in REFTEL 1 and REFTEL 2, please consult with the Department.

[1](#)2. USDEL is further instructed to deliver the following EOP:

The United States is pleased to have joined consensus on the Rights of the Child resolution. Our decision reflects our deep commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of children in our own country and around the world.

Among its notable calls, this year,s resolution encourages states to protect children from sexual exploitation and human trafficking. The United States has continued to strengthen our protections for children in this area and the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 contains many provisions protecting children from severe forms of human trafficking. The United States has also taken the initiative to combat serious child exploitation issues such as child pornography and child labor.

This resolution recognizes the basic needs of children. In the United States, and extensive network of federal, state, and local programs protects children,s rights on varied issues such as access to health care, foster care, and education. For example, President Barack Obama signed into law the Children,s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009, which provides substantial new resources to states and territories to strengthen their existing health care programs and extend coverage to an estimated 11 million children, 4 million who were previously uninsured.

This year,s resolution also highlights the important issues of a child,s ability to express their views in matters that affect them, either directly or through a representative, and their ability to participate in decisions that impact their lives. A number of U.S. states have established offices of child advocates or ombudspersons, and others are considering establishing such offices. These child advocates provide an important vehicle through which children can express their views in crucial matters that affect them such as child custody, foster care, and juvenile justice. This resolution also stresses the importance of the equal participation of girls. The rights of girls still require special attention, as the majority of children who do not attend primary school around the world are girls and girls around the world are still subjected to trafficking, exploitation, and sexual violence.

This resolution recognizes that the rights of children around

the world still have not been fully realized. The United States views UNICEF as a key partner in our global efforts to protect children and fully supports its initiatives to improve children's health care, education, protection from violence and exploitation, and advocacy on behalf of their rights. We particularly appreciate UNICEF's actions on behalf of children in emergency situations, its efforts to eradicate polio, and its work toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals related to basic universal primary education and the elimination of gender disparity in education. As an expression of our support, the United States provides a significant amount of voluntary contributions to UNICEF each year. In addition to its work with UNICEF, the United States works through UN partners like the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to further promote the protection of children.

We join consensus on this resolution today with the express understanding that it does not imply that States must become parties to instruments to which they are not a party or implement obligations under human rights instruments to which they are not a party and, by joining this resolution, we do not recognize any change in the current state of treaty or customary international law. We thank the co-sponsors for their flexibility and hope to continue working with them with regard to PP2 and OP2. We understand the resolution reaffirmation of prior documents to apply to those who affirmed them initially.

We recognize that today marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The United States has not ratified the Convention, but we are a party to its Optional Protocols. Consistent with the goals of the Convention, the United States continues its domestic efforts to strengthen already existing protections for children and to pursue new and innovative ways of ensuring that the rights of children are realized. In the last 20 years, around the world, the United States showed our commitment to the underlying spirit of the convention through domestic programs that address, among other things, health, education, and exploitation. Additionally, around the world, the United States works with the countries represented in this room to improve the lives of children everywhere. We look expectantly towards the next 20 years with the hope and strong belief that by working together, we can build upon the extraordinary progress we have already made for the world's children.

CLINTON